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AUTHOR Epstein, Howard V.
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ABSTRACT

Universities today attract a student population less homogeneous than those of past generations. The majority of all college students are women, and adults 25 years and older account for over 40% of all college enrollments. A study was conducted to examine inherent similarities and differences among college students with age a critical factor. Psychosocial and demographic characteristics of college undergraduates in three age groups (17-24, 40-45, and 46+) were studied. Subjects (N=105) completed questionnaires assessing purposes for pursuing a college degree, perception of life events which influenced college enrollment, reasons for college choice, and demographic data. Interviews were conducted with a subset of students. Using the Harvey-Houle paradigm (1978) as a frame of reference, students in each age group were found to place a high value on the role of a college education as the means for gaining knowledge. All three age groups identified "valuing of education" and "work experience" as the two greatest influences in their decisions to go to college. Students in all three groups identified "availability of a specific program of study" as the primary reason for choosing a particular college. These findings suggest that the adult learner is really not so different from younger learners in relation to factors motivating individuals to become college students. (The study instrument is appended.) (NB)

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COLLEGE STUDENTS COME OF AGE

Howard V. Epstein
Georgia State University
College of Public and Urban Affairs
Department of Social Work

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A visit to a university campus quickly confirms the fact that the profile of the contemporary college student is distinguished by diversity. No longer can college students be thought of as young high school graduates in search of an age appropriate next step in formal education. The modern university is now host to a student population less homogeneous than those of earlier generations. Perhaps this change began after World War II when returning soldiers utilizing veteran benefits under the GI Bill brought an older and in some respects more dedicated student to university campuses. Heterogeneity was further encouraged by the great social forces most directly related to civil rights. Whatever the factors (social, political or economic) it is apparent that the characteristics of college students are truly diverse and that perhaps they will never (or should never) be the same as college students of past generations.

What are the characteristics of today's college student population? The purpose of this research is to examine inherent similarities and differences among college students with age a critical factor. The observations presented are based upon responses from undergraduate students enrolled in a city university located in the southeastern United States, an institution of higher education where even the most casual observation confirms the diversity of college students.

Trends in College Enrollment

In the 350 years of higher education in America (since the founding of Harvard University) American colleges and universities have witnessed dramatic educational and social changes. Despite the many individual organizational differences there is a sense that these institutions share a common ethic that education enhances both the individual and society.

Whether this is perceived as myth or reality, there is the sense that the destiny of the world is linked to education. In the past a college education has usually been discussed in terms of young people. In his treatise of "Liberty in Education" Charles Eliot (1961) discussed the elective system of college courses in the following terms: "At what age can an American boy (emphasis added) best go to a university where choice of studies is free? I believe the normal age under reasonably favorable conditions to be eighteen" (emphasis added) (p.705). Eliot wrote this in 1885 and reflected the continuing perception of college students as male and adolescent. This theme recurs in much of the literature about college students.

There is an emerging acknowledgment that as colleges and universities have changed so have the constituent student bodies (which has been cause or effect is the subject of probable debate.) "Higher education has become increasingly accessible to all segments of the population" (Grant & Snyder, 1986, p.89). "According to the surveys, college enrollment has increased... about 30% over the past decade...Growth rates were quite high for black and other races, persons 25 years old and over, students in 2-year institutions, part-time students, and women" (Grant & Snyder, 1986, p.95).

Women are now the majority of all college students (Cowan, 1980; Fisher-Thompson, 1980; Dwinell, 1981) and adults 25 years and older account for over 40% of all college enrollments (Hill, Kroliczak, and Froomkin, 1982) and at the beginning of this decade, 14% of all college students were 36 years of age or older (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1980). These non-traditional students have captured the interest of researchers (Murphy, 1979; Epstein, 1980). Both the motivation of these students to pursue higher education and

their behavior as learners are being investigated. Both Murphy and Epstein operated from the assumption that one myth of higher education was that an undergraduate college education was reserved for youth. Studies have showed that adults are capable of being dedicated and motivated learners and important consumers of higher education (Kasworm, 1980; Aslanian and Brickell, 1980; Cross, 1979; Kuh, 1980). And thus it was becomingly increasingly apparent that college students could be of many backgrounds, and no less of many ages.

As research is reviewed, it is also apparent that little is known about the personal characteristics of college students when viewed from discrete age groupings. Can it be assumed that there are great (or any) differences between college undergraduates because of age? And what factors bring the individual to the threshold of the college campus? If equal access to higher education is a critical legal factor for admission, what are those individual factors which motivate an individual to seek a college education?

The Study and Methodology

Against this background this study was designed to identify and describe the psychosocial and demographic characteristics of college undergraduates in three age categories: 17-22, 40-45 and 46 and above. Four hundred and fifty undergraduate students (150 from each age category) were randomly selected by the office of the university registrar to participate in this study. The criterion for selection was that they were enrolled in degree focused programs during the same academic quarter. These age categories were selected using the anatomy of the life cycle as

described by Levinson, et al (1978). Levinson characterized 17 to 22 years of age as the period of early adult transition; 40-45 as the period of mid-life transition, and 46 year and above as the combination of middle adulthood and late adulthood with all of the cross-era transitions.

Each of the randomly selected students was sent a questionnaire which asked for the following information: purposes for pursuing a college degree at this time; perceptions of those critical life experiences which influenced the decision to become an undergraduate student; reasons for enrolling at this particular university, and some essential personal data (gender, race/ethnicity, etc.) Additional information was obtained through interviews which were conducted with some of the students who indicated on their completed questionnaires an interest in talking further about their experiences as a college undergraduate.

To explore the purposes for pursuing a college degree at this time a model developed by Harvey (1978) based upon research on adult learners by Houle (1961) was utilized to determine whether the college students participating in this study were motivated by a particular set of objectives: 1) goal oriented--to accomplish clear cut objectives; 2) activity oriented--to enjoy the process of learning and the stimulation of interchange opinions; 3) learning oriented--to seek knowledge for its own sake. To understand those personal experiences which influenced each student, the 11 components which Levinson, et al (1978) identified in the life cycle were utilized. Materials developed by the American Council on Education (1972) and Williams (1978) provided an extensive list of reasons which might have been determinants for enrolling in the university.

Data culled from the questionnaires were recorded using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences [SPSS-X (Nie, et al, 1985). This permitted a case-by-case analysis of information, and the computation of cumulative information from each of the three identified age groups.

Findings

The investigation was undertaken to examine inherent similarities and differences among college students in different age groups. Subjects were questioned about purposes for pursuing a college education at this time, perceptions of critical life experiences which influenced the decision to become an undergraduate student, reasons for enrolling at this university, and personal descriptive information. Interviews were conducted with some respondents who expressed interest in talking further about their experiences as undergraduates.

Findings from the questionnaire responses and interviews are reported in the remainder of this section. Similarities across all categories are reported first, followed by a detailed profile of each age category.

The overall response rate for this study was moderate. One hundred and five questionnaires were completed. Correspondence from others in the sample revealed that some graduate students had been included; the actual number of viable undergraduates for this study was not known. The three age categories were fairly evenly represented among the respondents: 41 were in the 17-24 age group; 34 were between 40 and 45; and 30 were 46 or older.

Comparisons and Contrasts

A detailed comparison of responses to all the major components of the questionnaire help give a sense of the similarities and differences between and among the three age categories of undergraduates. (Tables 1,2,3,4,5).

Using the Houle-Harvey paradigm (1978) of educational objectives the following observations can be cited:

Goal-oriented:

"To develop a sense of self-confidence and self-improvement" seems to be the most important goal for all ages. Students in the age categories 17-24 and 40-45 still are prepared for job advancement or promotion while those over 46 tend to be directed to learn new skills for a different job. Younger students unlike the older students emphasized the goal to demonstrate new knowledge as the result of a college education.

Activity-oriented:

The role of this category was consistent for students in all three age categories where emphasis was on learning from a reputable instructor, then interest in meeting new people and making new friends, and getting together with other people.

Learning-oriented:

The undergraduates 17-24 and 40-45 emphasized their interest in going to college to gain knowledge and learning new concepts. Students over 46 years of age saw the enjoyment of learning as a primary purpose in this category. Student 40 years old and above

indicated that to continue learning is a major preference unlike the younger group of students interviewed.

The Levinson, et al (1978) categories of critical life areas offered some thoughts about those life experiences that might have influenced these persons to assume the mantel of undergraduate college student. All three age categories of students identified "valuing of education," and "work experience" as the two greatest influences. Parents had greater influence on younger students while older students decision to go to college were the result of influence of a spouse or children. "Availability of leisure time" is more of an influence as the age of the student increases. Students in the 40 to 45 age category felt that turning points in their lives were influential unlike those in either of the other two age groups. And "death or loss of family members or friends" and "personal illness" was the least influential for all three age groups. (Tables 2,3,4,5)

Institutional choice was the third area investigated in this study. The essential question asked was why did any of these students choose this city university for their higher education. Students in all three age groups identified "availability of a specific program of study" as the primary reason for choosing this institution. "Affordable tuition" was an important reason for the younger students. The location of the university seemed to be an important consideration for the two groups of students, 17-24 and 40-45. Job placement services was especially important for younger students. "Influence of family" was a reason agreed to by more students 46 and over. All students found the availability of "flexible class schedules," and the "academic reputation" of the university acceptance

Table 1

Frequency Table (N = 105)

Variables	Frequency
Sex	
Female	74
Male	31
Age	
17-22	41
40-45	34
46+	30
Range: 18-84; Mean: 37-16)	
Race	
Native American	11
White	74
Black	16
Asian	1
Other	3
Marital Status	
Married	45
Never married	38
Divorced	13
Widowed	3
Separated	4
Missing	2
College Year	
Freshman	17
Sophomore	12
Junior	30
Senior	34
Other	10
Missing	2
Course Load	
Full-time	42
Part-time	59
Missing	4

Table 1 continued

Entry Status	
Transfer student	66
Freshman	34
Other	3
Missing	2
Sources for Financing Education	
Gifts	3
Personal earning from work	51
Current family income	40
Savings	14
Veteran's benefits	4
Scholarship	5
Other	28
Satisfaction as a College Student	
Yes	100
No	1
Missing	4

Table 2

Obvious Consistency In Percentage Of Agreement Among All Age Groups

	Statement	17-22	40-45	46+
1.15	To gain knowledge that is valuable to me	100.0	100.0	96.4
2.4	Valuing of education	97.6	97.1	96.7
2.8	Personal illness	2.6	3.2	3.7
3.2	Academic reputation of the university	73.2	72.7	78.6
3.7	Availability of specific program of studies	87.8	90.9	92.9
3.13	Availability of child care	0.0	0.0	0.0
3.18	Off-campus classes	28.9	29.4	32.0

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Table 3

Relative Diversity In Percentage Of Agreement Among All Age Groups

	Statement	17-22	40-45	46+
1.8	To divert attention from personal problems	9.8	14.7	42.3
2.2	My parents, siblings, grandparents, etc.	79.5	19.4	12.0
2.6	Availability of leisure time	15.8	43.8	57.1
2.10	Turning point in my life	17.1	48.5	50.0
3.19	Job placement services	53.8	21.2	13.6

Table 4

Statements With High Percentage Of Agreement

(Each age group's % of agreement is over 80% for that statement)

1.4	To develop a sense of self-confidence and self improvement
1.11	To continue learning because I enjoy it
1.14	To learn new concepts
1.15	To gain knowledge that is valuable to me
2.4	Valuing of education
2.5	Work experiences
3.7	Availability of specific program of studies

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Table 5

Statements With Low Percentage Of Agreement

(Each age group's % of agreement is below 11.1% for that statement)

2.8	Personal illness
2.9	Death or loss of family members or friends
3.13	Availability of child care

of all ages and races," and "availability of part-time study options" were valued as more important as the student age increases. A final tally of all the responses in this section of the questionnaire indicated that "university recruitment efforts" played little or no part in bringing these students to this institution of higher education.

Age Group 17-24

The typical student in this category was a 20.6 year old white female. She has never been married, is a senior, entered the university as a transfer student, and attends classes full time. She is enrolled in either the College of Business Administration, the College of Arts and Sciences or the College of Public and Urban Affairs. Her majors are business, accounting, or nursing. Her educational expenses are paid for either by her family or from personal earnings from current employment. She overwhelmingly (92.7%) feels that her experiences as a college student are satisfactory.

Objectives for Attending College

Students in this age category are goal oriented. Using the Harvey-Houle paradigm (1978) it is apparent that the students are committed to personal growth and development, preparing for a career and learning. Higher percentage of responses were to two objectives within the category "goal oriented:" "To develop a sense of self-confidence and self-improvement;" "To increase my earning potential by being prepared for job advancement;" and to the learning oriented statement: "To gain knowledge that is valuable to me." Less emphasis is given to the activity-oriented category which carries with it a sense of interest in the social aspects of education.

For this youngest group of undergraduates, the greatest factor influencing their decision to go to college was "valuing of education." Using Levinson, et al's, (1978) list of critical life areas, there emerges a sense that the 17 to 24 year old students have been less affected by external factors than very personal factors such as influences of family and friends, work related experiences, and a family or cultural valuing of education.

These students give the impression that they were quite practical when they chose this particular university for their undergraduate education. Out of 19 possible reasons for enrolling, the major reasons were related to the availability of a specific course of study; affordable tuition; an apparent flexible and convenient class schedule; convenience of location, and the academic reputation of the university.

Perhaps there are no surprises in examining the information these younger students volunteered. The impression left by a review of the data collected is that they are goal directed, and serious about the business of higher education.

Case Example

Ms. Y. is a 21 year old white female. Presently she works as an accountant, but anticipates that a college education and her major in accounting will enable her to establish her own accounting firm. She is the daughter of college educated parents, and just assumed that going to college was an appropriate thing for her to do. Ms. Y's schedule is quite busy since she goes to school part time and works full time. She sees this as demanding, but affords her a good income while completing a quality

education. Ms. Y. is very clear that a college education will give her greater earning potential. Although she has a great deal of trust in this university, she lamented that fact that there are few extra-curricular activities available for night students. Ms. Y. is very precise in seeing that for her a college education will further her perspective and offer her the opportunity to gain deeper insight into everyday living.

Age Group 40-45

The typical student in this age group is a white female, 42.2 years of age, who is married and in her senior year. She identifies with one of the following three colleges: Business Administration, Arts and Sciences, or Public and Urban Affairs. Her major is either criminal justice, management or English. She is overwhelmingly enrolled part time (70.6%), and has transferred to this university (73.5%). She finances her college education either from personal earnings, from work (44.1%) or current family income (35.3%).

Objectives for Attending College

Utilizing the Harvey-Houle (1978) model of college orientation, students emerge as a group with a great commitment of learning. The greater percentage of responses for students in the age group 40-45 was in the category labeled "learning-oriented." All responded that they agreed with the statement "To gain knowledge is valuable to me" followed by "To learn new concepts" (94.1%), and "To continue learning because I enjoy it" (91.2%). The next highest percentage of response was to the goal-oriented statement: "To develop a sense of self-confidence and self improvement" The responses from this group showed relative low agreement with any of the activity-oriented statements.

The Levinson, et al (1978) list of critical life incidents provided an additional opportunity to understand some of the underlying influences which resulted in the decision for these 40 to 45 year old students to pursue an undergraduate degree at what might be a nontraditional age. High percentages were identified in two categories of incidents: "Valuing of education" (97.1%), and "Work experience" (90.6%). Such considerations as influence from family, availability of newly found leisure time, or life/death issues were of lesser influence in choosing a career as a college student.

For this group of students, there was an interesting range of responses to the question of "why" enroll in this particular institution of higher education. A third of the possible 19 reasons for enrolling in this university highlighted the following: enrollment was not due to any recruitment efforts on the part of the university (3.2%), but rather due to the availability of a specific program of study (90.9%), a flexible class schedule (78.8%), proximity to work (77.4%) and home (76.5%). The academic reputation of the university (72.7%) and affordable tuition (70.6%) completed the dominant responses.

Case History

Mr. M. is a 40 year old white male currently employed in a police department. His decision to go to college was very personal, with no one apparently offering him advice or influencing him. He is a sophomore majoring in criminal justice. He had wanted to go to college after he completed his high school education, but was financially unable to afford a college education. After serving in the armed forces for 8 years, he started his college education on a part time basis, but now has been able to

transfer his energies to a full time schedule. He is unclear about his career goals although he is thinking about changing into a different area with the help of his bachelors degree and a graduate degree to be decided. He found the admissions process to the university difficult. He had to retake the SAT because it had been so many years since he was graduated from high school when he originally prepared for that entrance examination. Mr. M. continues to feel comfortable as an older student at the university with much support coming from his classroom instructors. Mr. M. states that "....a college education should broaden a person's mind. The most important thing a person can learn is to think rationally."

Age Group 46 and Above

The age range for the students in this age group was 46 to 84 years of age. The typical student was 54.7 years old, white female, married, and currently a junior. She was enrolled in either the College of Business Administration, the College of Arts and Sciences, or the College of Education. None identified any declared major course of study. Most (70%) were enrolled part-time, and had transferred to this university (56.7%). Half of these students financed their college education from personal earnings from work with only 20% depending upon current family income. All (100%) identified their experiences as a college student as satisfactory with no dissenting opinions.

Objective for Attending College

In reviewing the responses from this oldest group of undergraduates in this study, it is interesting to note that the least valued objective for attending college was "To have something to do." This may contradict the

usual notion that many middle and older adults give a great amount of energies to socialization, to activity-oriented objectives. Their responses give the sense of priority that the oldest students interviewed emphasized:

To develop a sense of self-confidence and self-improvement.

To continue learning because I enjoy it.

To gain knowledge that is valuable to me.

To learn new concepts.

To continue my preference for learning as an activity.

To learn from a reputable instructor.

The valuing of these objectives give the sense of a group of committed and forward thinking students.

The critical incidents that helped influence these persons 46 years plus to assume the mantel of student also reflect a range of internal and external criteria. Note that "valuing of education," and "work experience" were acknowledged as having the greater influence.

Again recruitment efforts of the university played a very small role in the enrollment of this age category of students. For this 46 year plus group, perhaps the first 5 categories of reasons are appropriate to cite:

Availability of specific program of study.

Flexible class schedule.

Academic reputation of the university.

Availability of part-time study.

University acceptance of all ages and races.

Case Study

Mrs. E., 49, enjoys studying and feels that she gains much from the classes she left 30 years ago. Her children are now grown, and her husband supports her pursuing a college degree. Mrs. E. is quick to acknowledge that she is now fortunate enough not to have to work so that she can go to college and do so with a great deal of vigor and no great restraints. She found returning to a university a very simple process with "all the necessary paperwork" offering no stumbling block. She has a great deal of trust for this particular university because it "...is a school which makes me feel comfortable because it does not care about your age or whatever!" Mrs. E. has some very definite ideas about the purpose and value of a college education: "I think it is unfortunate that the opportunity to attend college comes at the wrong time in most students lives (18 years old)--more people seem to have more definite ideas of what they want for themselves when they are older. I believe an education is necessary for most people in today's society."

-Final Thoughts

The purpose of this study was to identify and describe the personal characteristics of undergraduates currently enrolled in degree programs at a city university in southern United States. Age was the essential critical variable, the dependent variable. Three age categories (17-24; 40-45; 46+) of degree-seeking students were selected for their potential similarities and differences; for the fact that some would be considered traditional college students and others not. A mailed questionnaire supplemented by personal interviews with some of the randomly selected students sought to understand three distinct dimensions of the students: 1) What was their

objective in attending college? 2) What major factors influenced their decision to attend college at this time? 3) Why did they select this particular institution of higher education?

The study was initiated with the assumption that there would be a range of differences between and among the students. This is a conclusion that cannot be verified. The comparison of responses present the degree of consistency and diversity among the three groups. It should be noted that with the Harvey-Houle paradigm (1978) as a frame of reference students in each age group place a high value on the role of a college education as the means for gaining knowledge while presenting much less agreement that college has been seen as a means for diversion from personal problems. This priority of agreement is reinforced in responses to the Levinson, et al (1978) list of critical life areas where "valuing education" was a dominant factor in deciding to pursue a college education. The students in the three different groups showed an obvious diversity of agreement that either family, leisure time, or personal turning points were critical factors in seeking a college education. There was a high degree of agreement among all three age groups that the "academic reputation of the university," and the "availability of specific programs of study" were factors in the decision to attend this university. It may be noted that none of the students saw the university job placement office as an important student service.

So the inevitable question must be asked: Is age an essential factor that distinguishes students? An examination of the information gathered from these students suggests that age may offer some variations, but there are insufficient data to suggest that being older or younger necessarily sets people apart as adult learners. In examining the data on the

individual questionnaires there is the sense that the institution may be the essential critical variable; that a city university (or at least this city university) offers an opportunity for people of many ages, backgrounds, and interests to pursue a college education. Given the fact that very few students responded to recruitment efforts of the university those who want a college degree may see this institution as accessible and affordable, and not totally unreceptive to diversity, be that diversity a fact of age, race, ethnicity, or the constraints of scheduling time to attend classes.

This study may have some pedagogical and administrative implications for institutions of higher education. The adult learner is really not so different from younger learners, at least, in relation to factors motivating individuals to become college students. What may be essential for universities is to better sensitize and prepare instuctors to understand the possible similarties and differences between the younger and adult learner, and for universities to examine the importance of enrolling students of all ages.

APPENDIX A

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT SURVEY

Please complete the entire questionnaire

For each statement in this questionnaire please circle the symbol on the right side of the page which best represents your level of agreement with the statement (**SA**=Strongly Agree, **A**=Agree, **D**=Disagree, **SD**=Strongly Disagree). If you have no opinion of the statement, please circle the number of the statement.

1.0 What are your objectives for attending college at this time. Please circle that symbol which best represents your level of agreement with each statement concerning the reason you are in college at this time. Even though some of the statements may sound similar, consider each one separately.

1.1	To become more effective in my present work.	SA A D SD
1.2	To learn new skills in order to qualify for a different job.	SA A D SD
1.3	To increase my earning potential by being prepared for job advancement or promotion.	SA A D SD
1.4	To develop a sense of self-confidence and self-improvement.	SA A D SD
1.5	To demonstrate new ability and knowledge to my friends and associates.	SA A D SD
1.6	To get together with other people.	SA A D SD
1.7	To make new friends.	SA A D SD
1.8	To divert attention from personal problems.	SA A D SD
1.9	To learn from a reputable instructor.	SA A D SD
1.10	To have something to do.	SA A D SD
1.11	To continue learning because I enjoy it.	SA A D SD
1.12	To continue my preference for learning as an activity.	SA A D SD
1.13	To keep current about new events and new information.	SA A D SD
1.14	To learn new concepts.	SA A D SD
1.15	To gain knowledge that is valuable to me.	SA A D SD

Please continue with section #2 items, other side of this page.

2.0 Decisions are influenced by both external situations and internal reasons. Please circle that symbol which indicates the level of influence each had in your decision to go to college at this time.

2.1	My spouse and/or children.	SA A D SD
2.2	My parents, siblings, grandparents, etc.	SA A D SD
2.3	Important relationships with people other than family.	SA A D SD
2.4	Valuing of education.	SA A D SD
2.5	Work experiences.	SA A D SD
2.6	Availibility of leisure time.	SA A D SD
2.7	Religious, political, and other personal interests.	SA A D SD
2.8	Personal illness.	SA A D SD
2.9	Death or loss of family members or friends.	SA A D SD
2.10	Turning points in my life (retirement, widowhood, children leaving home, etc.).	SA A D SD

3.0 The following are some reasons you might have for enrolling at Georgia State University rather than at another college or university. Please circle that symbol to indicate the level of influence for each reason.

3.1	Influence of family.	SA A D SD
3.2	Academic reputation of the University.	SA A D SD
3.3	Availability of financial assistance.	SA A D SD
3.4	Friends are attending GSU.	SA A D SD
3.5	Affordable tuition.	SA A D SD
3.6	Professional advisement.	SA A D SD
3.7	Availability of specific program of studies.	SA A D SD
3.8	Proximity to home.	SA A D SD
3.9	Proximity to work.	SA A D SD
3.10	No other college nearby.	SA A D SD
3.11	State sponsored (public institution).	SA A D SD
3.12	University recruitment efforts.	SA A D SD
3.13	Availability of child care.	SA A D SD
3.14	Availability of part-time study options.	SA A D SD
3.15	University acceptance of all ages and races.	SA A D SD

Please continue with items from Section #3, next page.

3.16	Transfer credit policies.	SA A D SD
3.17	Flexible class schedule.	SA A D SD
3.18	Off-campus classes.	SA A D SD
3.19	Job placement services.	SA A D SD

4.0 Please provide the following information:

4.1 Your age _____

4.2 Sex (check one) 4.2.1 Female _____ 4.2.2 Male _____

4.3 Race/Ethnicity (check one): 4.3.1 Native American ____ 4.3.2 White ____ 4.3.3 Hispanic _____

4.3.4 Black ____ 4.3.5 Asian ____ 4.3.6 Other _____(Please specify:_____)

4.4 Current marital status (check one): 4.4.1 Married ___ 4.4.2 Never married ___ 4.4.3 Divorced ___

4.4.4 Widowed____ 4.4.5 Separated ____

4.5 List ages of your children (if you have any) _____

4.5.1. Circle above ages of any children now living with you.

4.6 Have any members of your family graduated from any college? (Check one) 4.6.1 Yes ____ 4.6.2 No ____

4.6.3 If yes, indicate who (mother, father, sister, etc.) _____

4.6.4 If yes, did any graduate from Georgia State University? 4.6.5 Yes____ 4.6.6 No ____

4.6.7 If yes, who (mother, father, sister, etc.): _____

4.7 Current college year (Check one): 4.7.1 Freshman___ 4.7.2 Soph. ___ 4.7.3 Junior___ 4.7.4 Senior___

4.8 Your college or department _____

4.9 Your declared/anticipated major _____

4.10 Did you enter GSU as a (check one): 4.10.1 Transfer student ___ 4.10.2 As a freshman ___

4.11 If you entered as a transfer student, please indicate the:

4.11.1 Name of the institution from which you were transferred:_____

4.11.2 Why did you transfer to GSU? _____

4.12 Are you currently enrolled (check one): 4.12.1 Full-time____ 4.12.2 Part-time____

4.13 Is GSU the first college or university you have been enrolled in? 4.13.1 Yes___ 4.13.2 No ____

4.14 How do you mostly finance your college education (please check those that apply):
4.14.1 Gifts___ 4.14.2 Personal earnings from work___ 4.14.3 Current family income___
4.14.4 Savings___ 4.14.5 Veteran's Benefits___ 4.14.6 Scholarship___ 4.14.7 Other___(Please describe):_____

Please continue, completing the questionnaire on the back of this page

5.0 My experiences as a college student have been satisfactory. 5.1 Yes___ 5.2 No___
5.3 Please discuss: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6.0 The purpose of this study is to identify and describe personal characteristics of undergraduates at Georgia State University. Since this questionnaire only addressed some areas of the topic, please use this section (or your own paper) for any comments, observations, or questions you might want to add about being a college student at this time in your life.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you very much for your time and interest. Please remember to return this completed questionnaire in the enclosed prepaid self addressed envelope to:

Howard V. Epstein, Ph. D., ACSW
Department of Social Work
Georgia State University
University Plaza
Atlanta, GA 30303-3091

If you are available for a follow-up personal interview, please sign here: _____

Address: _____ Telephone: Work _____

_____ Home _____

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